



**WisDOT/WEDA Meeting  
Friday, August 6, 2004 – 10:00-11:30 a.m.**

People in attendance

Darryl Landeau, North Central Wisconsin RPC  
Bob Cook, TDA  
Ben Guido, Key Rail  
Pete Mann, City of Washburn  
Amy Boyer, Hamilton Consulting  
Andy Lisak, The Development Association  
Todd Pierce, TDA  
Gary Delveaux, Wisconsin Public Service Corp.  
Phil Scherer, Ayres Associates  
Tom Walker, Wisconsin Transportation Builders Association  
James Otterstein, Rock County Planning  
Dennis Leong, WisDOT BOP  
Casey Newman, WisDOT BOP  
Liat Lichtman, WisDOT, BOP  
Jonquil Johnston, WisDOT, BOP

1. Overview of WisDOT's meeting purpose and WisDOT's long-range plan by WisDOT staff:  
The meeting began at 10:15. Casey Newman gave an overview of WisDOT's upcoming long-range transportation plan, *Connections 2030* (C2030). WisDOT is currently seeking input on transportation planning issues from stakeholder groups and larger Wisconsin cities. Plan alternatives should be available for public comment in July of 2005. The plan is scheduled to be completed in 2006.
2. Gathering of input from WEDA: Discussion focused on the following issues:
  - a. Upcoming Budget and Connections 2030  
It was noted WEDA members had concern for Connections 2030 being a policy based plan. WEDA members felt Connections 2030 should more specifically address needs. It was acknowledged that previously completed modal plans contain need analyses, but WEDA members felt the analyses were aged. WEDA members felt a need based plan makes a case for necessary spending. They noted that there is a need to address funding shortfalls in the Connections 2030 and encouraged WisDOT to take a stronger stance on financing options. WEDA would like to see more realistic implementation and financing than past plans. They noted the planning process is good, but the result must be an improved transportation system in 20-30 years.

b. State-wide Coverage

A question was raised regarding how differing issues in cities and metropolitan areas, towns, and rural areas will be addressed. It was noted if areas of the state with the most pressing need for transportation improvements are given priority, other areas, such as Marinette and Rhinelander, might not have projects funded. WEDA members recommended coordinated and combined investment. Two things need to be addressed by Connections 2030: 1) connectivity, even in areas without congestion (rural areas) and 2) congestion in urban areas. Mobility and reliability are important in both rural and urban areas.

d. Rail

Freight movement is a priority. The rail system needs to be looked at as a business. Rail service is currently declining, especially in northeastern Wisconsin. Multi-modalism is important to commerce. When rail is not an effective means of transportation, other modes should be available as options. WEDA members felt the state should always acquire rail corridors when abandoned and preserve them for potential short line rail service. The availability and reliability of short line rail service and interchange with Class 1 Rail Roads is an issue in Wisconsin.

The state needs to define its role in rail. The state role has changed over time and trends in the rail industry have also changed. It was stated there should be more service provided for the amount of taxation. WEDA agreed to look more closely at this issue and would provide additional feedback to the WisDOT.

There is a need for additional capacity between Eau Claire and the Twin Cities in Minnesota.

e. Economic Development

Connections 2030 needs to develop a transportation system that gives Wisconsin economic advantages. There is a need to maintain the effectiveness of existing transportation corridors. Interstate designation is a major economic indicator for business/industry recruitment. Four-lane non-Interstate capacity can also bring new businesses to the area. It was noted WEDA members feel many miles of highway that are part of the Corridors 2020 system will need to be maintained and possibly expanded from 4 to 6 lanes to promote economic development. We should not take the perspective that the Corridors 2020 system is “done.”

Several WEDA members suggested WisDOT enhance the visibility of the existing 4 lane system with our state maps and other public information. This can also be used as a tool to enhance economic opportunities.